



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

4905 5th Ave. Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363
Comm. (334) 255-3770 Fax (334) 255-2266
<https://safety.army.mil>

Resource Document Recreation Safety *Travel Planning and Preparation*

Art Powell

Ira.a.powell.civ@mail.mil

334-255-3703

Strategic Communication Directorate

U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

August 14, 2012

Narrative:

Soldiers are required to enter the Travel Risk Planning System and enter travel data to review it with a supervisor. Private motor travel is the greatest accidental-death hazard to Soldiers and the Army has plans in place to educate Soldiers, Families and Civilians on how to travel safer.

The average motorist in the U.S. drives 13,476 miles per year, according to Federal Highway Administration. Those miles add up.

The FHA's May 2012 Travel Trends reports that travel on all roads and streets in the U.S. increased by 5.7 billion vehicle miles for May 2012 compared with May 2011.

Planning is a key component of any travel and motorists with an understanding of what they face in mileage, time, weather, fuel and food stops and access to roadside assistance service are better prepared.

Key Messages:

- High fuel prices haven't brought highway traffic to a stop. Motorists drive more than 250-billion miles a month in the United States.
- The number of person-trips is approximately 400-billion annually.
- Planning for a trip leads to greater fuel efficiency and lower expenses by planning meals and stops and passenger comfort. Online services, which assist in travel planning, can help determine the shortest/best route for road travel and the location of services such as fuel, food and lodging.
- While the driver and passengers play a role in travel, so does a vehicle. Have it checked and serviced by a qualified mechanic prior to departure. Don't delay on recommended repairs or

services. You don't want a breakdown on the road.

- Distracted driving is dangerous. Stay focused on operating your motor vehicle.

Talking points:

- Reducing Soldier fatalities during travel in private vehicles is important because private travel is the leading off-duty killer of Soldiers.
- Personal responsibility is important because Soldiers traveling in private vehicles off-duty make their own decisions.
- Fighting indiscipline, distracted driving, alcohol, drug abuse, speeding, not wearing safety belts, personal protective equipment are core factors in reducing private vehicle fatalities among Soldiers.
- Don't be a victim of 'get-home-itis.'
- Carry supplies to match the environment you'll travel in: food and water for hot weather, the same, plus blankets for cold weather. The best way to stay safe in cold weather is to not travel in it.
- Most accidents happen close to home. Don't think the trip to work isn't hazardous.

Tips:

- Understand the hazards associated with travel and plan accordingly.
- Stay rested. The National Safety Council lists third shift workers, people who have been traveling for too long in any given period of time, those with unrecognized sleep disorders and those using prescribed medication or sedatives as high-risk for drowsy driving.
- Know the signs, be prepared to stop and rest.
- Don't do all the driving if a qualified driver is available to rotate the responsibility.
- Have a plan. Don't begin a trip with 'Let's see how far we can get the first day.' Have a goal. Stick with it.
- Be reasonable in how far you think you can travel in a day.
- If you get tired, stop and rest.
- Don't be a victim of 'get-there-itis.'
- Stop frequently. Get out of your vehicle. When you return to your vehicle, check all the tires and look for signs of leaks or smells that could indicate a problem.
- Don't eat huge meals and then get back on the highway. Drowsiness is a danger.
- Don't consume alcohol while driving.
- If you become injured, use your first-aid supplies as necessary or let others know of their location.
- Don't practice distracted driving habits such as texting while driving. If you're a passenger, call it to the offender's attention that distracted driving is hazardous.

Historical Reference:

<https://safety.army.mil/>

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov>

<http://www.nsc.org>

Statistics:

- Ninety-one percent of all commuting trips occur on weekdays, with the majority of these trips starting between 5-10 a.m., and again between 3-7 p.m.
- Sixty-four percent of all family and personal trips occur on weekdays between 7 a.m. -7 p.m.
- Sixty-two percent of trips for social or recreational purposes occur on weekdays, most in the early evening.

- According to the Office of Highway Policy Information, Federal Highway Administration, 63 percent of daily vehicle trips are between 1-9 miles in length, according to the 2009 National Highway Traffic Survey.

Follow us on:

